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Hair Tissue Mineral Analysis


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Craving Fat

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Fat Cravings

What are the causes of cravings for fats or oily foods and are there specific ways to handle these cravings?

The Importance Of Fats

In recent years, there has been a campaign against fats' waged in the medical community and the media. One can gain the impression that fats and oils are useless and harmful. This could not be further from the truth. Fats and oils have always been a part of the human diet. Good quality fats and oils are an excellent source of the fat-soluble vitamins, A, D, E and K, essential fatty acids, acetates and many other substances needed for our health. Fats and oils are especially important for children.

Acetates provided by fats are high energy molecules, especially needed by fast oxidizers. Essential fatty acids play critical roles in cell membranes and for the production of prostaglandins and the myelin sheath around nerves. Sterols such as cholesterol are the precursor for vital adrenal and sex hormones. Weston Price, MD, identified a "factor X" in butterfat, that has very beneficial effects for dental health.

Normal Cravings For Fats

Some people crave fats and oils because their bodies are looking for essential fatty acids or other nutrients found in the oils. The standard American diet is deficient in essential fatty acids. This is due to the widespread use of oils such as sunflower, safflower, peanut, soy and corn. These warm-weather oils are lower in the essential omega-6 fatty acids. Oils which contain more of these omega-6 fatty acids include the oils of flaxseed, hemp, evening primrose, borage and oils found in cold-water fish.

Deficiencies of vitamins A, D, E and K are also common. One reason is that most vegetable oils are refined. The vitamin E is destroyed and other chemical changes may occur in the oils. Most vegetable oils sold in supermarkets and health food stores are boiled for hours except olive oil, dark sesame oil, flax seed oil, borage and evening primrose oil. Unfortunately, these oils go rancid very fast, often within a few weeks, even in the refrigerator.

Margarine and other hardened oils are even worse from a nutritional standpoint. In view of the kind of oils eaten today and the processing of oils, some cravings for fats may be a natural desire for essential nutrients needed by our bodies.

Fats And The Metabolic Rate

Dr. George Watson realized some years ago that some people require more fats and oils in their diet in order to feel their best. Sometimes fat cravings are legitimate attempts to balance one's body chemistry. People with low hair tissue calcium and magnesium levels and high hair sodium and potassium levels often crave fats and oils to balance their chemistry.

Fats provide acetates and are a slow-burning, long-lasting energy food. They contain the most calories of any food group. Fast oxidizers burn their food rapidly and use up more calories. Fats and oils have a calming and relaxing effect on these individuals.

This type of fat craving is seen commonly in young children, who may for example, grab an entire stick of butter and eat it as is. The fat provides nutrients they need. In most cases, it is best to allow the child to eat the fat, provided the diet is otherwise healthy and balanced.

It is important to remember that what we refer to as slow oxidizers, in fact, may go back and forth during the day between slow and fast metabolism. The pattern revealed on a mineral analysis is only an average. Therefore, anyone may go through periods of faster metabolism in which they need more calories and specifically those from fats or oils.

Fats For Flavor And Texture

One of the main reasons for fat cravings is that fats and oils are an important source of flavor, aroma and texture for our foods. This is particularly true of animal fats. Think of the taste of dry popcorn compared to popcorn with fresh butter. Similarly, think of how much a salad dressing (usually with oil) can add to the flavor of a plain salad. Butter, lard and various oils are used in many, many products to add aroma and flavor to food.

Fats And Anxiety

Early in his research, Dr. Paul Eck noted that slow oxidizers with elevated copper levels often craved fats in the form of dairy products. He noted that many slow metabolizers with copper toxicity have some of the characteristics of fast metabolizers. Perhaps this is due to effects of copper on the thyroid gland. Among other things, they are prone to anxiety feelings.

Eating fats can help calm this anxiety. Fats in the diet will tend to slow the oxidation rate. This is particularly true of certain fats, such as milk, kefir and cheese. These products not only contain fat, but also calcium and L-tryptophan, an amino acid with a calming effect.

While slow oxidizers have elevated tissue calcium and magnesium, often it is biologically unavailable. This is especially true if the hair calcium level is over about 80 mg%. This situation may create a deficiency of calcium in the blood, leading to feelings of anxiety.

Other Causes

Cravings may be psychological, reminding one of pleasant memories or better times. Cravings may also be related to food allergies. Oddly, one may crave foods that one is sensitive to.

Handling Fat Cravings

Here are some suggestions for fat cravings:

- Eat some good quality fats and oils regularly. This will provide the body with needed nutrients and may reduce cravings for these essential nutrients. Don't be afraid of fats and oils.
- If one is a fast oxidizer, fat craving is normal. Some fat or oils are needed daily as part of an entire program to help balance body chemistry.
- If one craves fats to give flavor and aroma to food, it may be possible to add to food other condiments that would provide the flavor or aroma that one desires.
- Slow oxidizers with dairy craving may need supplements of calcium and magnesium, more protein and other foods and nutrients to help balance their body chemistry.

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